



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

 [News Releases](#)  [Podcasts](#)

For immediate release:
April 11, 2011

Media Contact: Carla Harris
(804) 726-7107

Virginia Hospitals Recognized for Outstanding Efforts in Establishing Paternity

Richmond, Va. — Ten Virginia hospitals are being recognized for exceptional performance with the Virginia Paternity Establishment Program (PEP).

The Virginia Department of Social Services' (VDSS) Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) sponsors the PEP, operated by the Center for the Support of Families (CSF). The program offers unmarried parents the opportunity to voluntarily acknowledge and establish paternity of their newborns before the mother, father, and baby leave the hospital to go home. This year the Commonwealth welcomes the Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center to its family of PEP participating hospitals, now totaling 59 medical facilities serving parents statewide.

"We are proud of our partnership with Virginia's birthing hospitals and appreciate their commitment to establishing paternity. Establishing both biological parents from the beginning strengthens families and provides life-long benefits to children including emotional and financial support, as well as a medical history," said VDSS Commissioner Martin D. Brown.

Warren Memorial Hospital has a compelling success story. Faced with a 49 percent establishment rate, Program Director Kimberly Shirley and her team went to work. In 2005 paternity responsibilities were relocated to the Women's Care Center under the direction of Shirley. Rates dramatically improved to 65 percent by the end of the calendar year. Paternity establishment rates have continued to improve each year to reach the "Top Hospital" ranking in the Commonwealth for 2010 with a rate of 79.91 percent. "My staff and I are so happy to receive this honor and we are committed to continue to provide this important service to the parents and children in the communities we serve."

Virginia's hospital paternity establishment rate currently averages 67 percent. "Our partnership with the hospitals and the Center for the Support of Families continues to benefit all children born in the Commonwealth," said Nick Young, VDSS Deputy Commissioner-DCSE Director. "Each child born in Virginia and throughout the nation deserves the benefits of having two parents acknowledged. It represents our commitment to the children we serve."

While the paternity establishment rate varies among Virginia’s birthing facilities, the highest rates were found in hospitals where a “Family Birthing Center” or OB/GYN unit has direct oversight of the program. The CSF encourages hospital management to position the service in “Mother/Baby” or “Women’s Care” units to better assist new parents with this process. CSF Program Manager Lisa Cauthorne explained, “We have seen time and time again the improvement that is made by having dedicated management and staff provide this service. We encourage all departments that have direct contact with patients (OB/GYNs, clinics, midwives, etc.,) to participate in this program.”

These Virginia hospitals are recognized for outstanding contributions to the state’s PEP:

State Ranking	Hospital Name	2010 Paternity Establishment Rates
1	Warren Memorial Hospital-Valley Health	79.91%
2	Martha Jefferson Hospital	79.53%
3	INOVA Fair Oaks Hospital	79.02%
4	Montgomery Regional Hospital-Lewis Gale	78.21%
5	INOVA Loudoun Hospital Center	77.80%
6	Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital	77.42%
7	CJW Medical Center-Johnston-Willis	77.27%
8	Twin County Regional Hospital	77.18%
9	Fauquier Hospital Inc.	75.74%
10	Winchester Medical Center- Valley Health	75.64%

Visit <http://www.vapaternity.org> for a complete list of the rank of Virginia’s 59 birthing hospitals.

###